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There is one contradiction which runs through the entire book, and which is theoretically fundamental. On the one hand the author speaks of the moral law as a natural law, of progress as an inevitable accompaniment of human evolution, of natural selection, *etc.* On the other hand the author speaks of the control of evolution, and makes a plea for education, closing with this sentence: "In the phase which its evolutionary aims have reached the first indispensable reform which must precede or accompany all others, if they are to be aught but stages in the long process of trial and failure, is an organized effort to provide for the handing down with untampering honesty the full measure of those powers which man has acquired, and to transmit them to the race. Failing such a provision, troglodytism and medievalism must necessarily continue with us, and all attempts to shake off the dead hand of unburied evil must remain essentially ineffectual" (p. 371). To me this seems to raise the question of what after all is meant by evolution and laws of nature, *etc.* I think we owe a vote of thanks to Mr. Briffault for bringing out this contradiction, or at least this ambiguity so obviously and frankly.

Mr. Briffault's book, however, deserves more positive justification than that. In a time when the protagonists of intelligence are obviously disheartened, when courage is failing, to bring forth an enthusiastic defense of the power of reason is a real service.

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#### JOURNALS AND NEW BOOKS

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY. October, 1920. *An Experimental Study of Visual Movement and the Phi Phenomenon* (pp. 317-332) : F. L. DIMMICK. — The integration of a time and quality element in a gray flash gives the perception of movement in vision. *A Psychological Interpretation of Modern Social Problems and of Contemporary History: A Survey of the Contributions of Le Bon* (pp. 333-369) : HARRY ELMER BARNES. — Le Bon was not an accurate social scientist but suggested some valuable theories. He emphasized psychic traits as being the determining factors of society rather than institutions. Some of the traits named are mysticism, racial tendencies and national characteristics. *A Psycho-Analytical Study of Edgar Allan Poe* (pp. 370-402) : LORINE PRUETTE. — Poe as an only boy had many weaknesses of an only child. His poetry shows a high degree of introversion and flight from reality. *Minor Studies from the Psychological Laboratory of Clark University. Highest Audible Tones from Steel Cylinders* (pp. 403-406) : C. C. PRATT. — The limen is something less than

20,000, with smaller individual variations than in the use of the Galton whistle. *Book Notes.* M. M. Knight, Iva L. Peters and Phyllis Blanchard, *Taboo and Genetics.* Sigmund Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis.* H. L. Hollingworth, *The Psychology of Functional Neuroses.* Wilfred Lay, *Man's Unconscious Passion.* William McDougall, *The Group Mind.* Henri Bergson, *Mind and Energy.* George Lansing Raymond, *Ethics and Natural Law.* Irwin Edman, *Human Traits and Their Social Significance.* *Proceedings of the International Conference of Women Physicians.* Bernard Muscio, *Industrial Psychology.* Henry Lane Eno, *Activism.* Dorothy Tudor Owen, *The Child Vision.* Julius Magnussen, *God's Smile.* J. W. McSpadden, *Famous Psychic Stories.* Orison Swett Marden, *Success Fundamentals.*

Gollancz, Hermann. Translation of Dodi Ve-Nechdi (Uncle and Nephew) by Berachya Hanakdan, and of Abelard of Bath's *Quaestiones Naturales.* Oxford: University Press. 1920. Pp. xxii + 161.

Janet, Charles. *Considérations sur l'Être Vivant. Première Partie: Résumé préliminaire de la Constitution de l'Orthobionte.* Beauvais: A. Dumontier. 1920. Pp. 80.

Sortais, Gaston. *La Philosophie Moderne depuis Bacon jusqu'à Leibniz.* Tome premier. Paris: P. Lethielleux. 1920. Pp. 592. 20 fr.

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#### NOTES AND NEWS

In a paper entitled "Cosmic Evolution," read before the Aristotelian Society, March seventh, Professor J. E. Boodin advanced the hypothesis of cosmic interaction to account for the evolutionary series on our earth. Modern science and modern philosophy agree in treating the evolution of our earth as an independent drama. The later levels of evolution are supposed by some magic to emerge from the earlier—life from matter, thought from reflex action. Some have attempted to introduce a *plus* principle such as an *élan vital* or entelechy. But such a principle would have to be present from the beginning, thus antedating life. It would have to account for the reversed or alternating directions of evolutionary series, and sometimes it would have to lie dormant for long periods of time. It is at best an abstraction of the fact that certain processes have direction. It does not explain the fact. For this we need a cosmic dynamics, and this is found in interaction. Interaction is not merely a speculative principle. The discovery of interaction has